(b) the number out of them who are retired bureaucrats and from public life, separately; and

(c) the details regarding those belonging to SC/ST and minority communities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) Appointments of 94 Ambassadors/High Commissioners have been made by the Government from May, 2004 till date.

(b) Of of above, 4 are retired Government servants while 6 are eminent personalities from public life.

(c) A total of 13 Ambassadors/High Commissioners belonging to the SC and ST communities have been appointed since May, 2004. The Government does not maintain records of religious affiliations of Government servants.

Indian Baha'i in Iran

1070. SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government received representation from 3,50,000 Indian Baha'i living in Iran about gross human violation, denial of university education and report of Asma Jehangir, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief about the identification of Baha'i in every trade and profession since 1979, execution of some follow Baha'i and gradual cleansing to Baha'i in Iran; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) No representation has been received from Baha'is living in Iran, who are Iranian nationals. India believes in the protection of human rights and the observance of rule of law and expects all countries to abide by their international commitments.

Passport offices at Tiruchi

1071. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Passport office at Tiruchi caters to a maximum number of applications from Madurai and nearby region;

(b) if so, whether is it proposed to set up a separate Passport office at Madurai;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is demand for opening a Passport office at Madurai. However, no decision has been taken as yet.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) To open a new Passport office at any place, a variety of factors such as demand for passports including the number of passport applications from that area in the last three years, administrative exigencies and availability of manpower are taken into consideration. Based on these factors there is, at present, no decision has been taken to open a separate Passport Office at Madurai.

Summit of Shanghai Corporation

1072. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether fifth summit of Shanghai Corporation issued declaration regarding security and counter terrorism;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if so, the details of "Heads of Nations" participated in the above summit;

(d) if so, the details of Indian participation in the above summit; and

(e) the reasons in detail on the absence of the "Head of the Nation" in the Indian delegation for the above summit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The Sixth Summit Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which was held in Shanghai on 15th June, 06 issued a Declaration and nine other documents. With